



Public Safety Communications Highlights

- NECP Goal #2 reporting on county Communications Capabilities has surpassed the 50% mark! However, only 27% of the Performance Evaluation reports have been submitted.
- Online status maps of the statewide microwave and trunking systems have been updated at the following links:
 - * <http://pssb.mt.gov/pscommunications.mcpx>
 - * <http://interop.mt.gov/default.mcpx>
- The Eastern Microwave Build-Out Project is completed and connectivity testing began the week of May 7.
- Roger Smith, Microwave Network Administrator, has performed 23 site inspections so far this spring to assess the sites for winter damage, conduct generator and alarm checks, and take equipment photos that will be used for inventory purposes.

SIGB Members Updated on NECP Goal # 2 Reporting

At the Tues., May 8 meeting of the Statewide Interoperability Governing Board (SIGB), E. Wing Spooner, Public Safety Services Bureau, gave an update on the status of county reporting of their ability to demonstrate response-level emergency communications during day-to-day or routine incidents, which is Goal # 2 of the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP). Wing's presentation slides are available [here](#).

This reporting consists of two types of information: capabilities and performance. Capability data is based on the key foundational elements of the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum. Performance data focuses on the ability to communicate, manage resources, and make timely decisions during an incident, exercise or planned event. Click [here](#) for the capabilities questionnaire and [here](#) for the county performance survey.

These questionnaires were supposed to have been submitted to the Dept. of Homeland Security's Office of Emergency Communication (OEC) last fall. OEC provides direct support to state, local, and tribal emergency responders and government officials via its Technical Assistance program in the

form of training, tools and onsite assistance. Montana's access to OEC-sponsored TA has been in jeopardy because it has been so far behind in its reporting.

Fortunately, that picture is changing. Four additional counties have submitted both of their reports. Kudos go to Ed Auker, Big Horn Co. DES; Charlie Gilmore and Dave Rau, Lewis and Clark Co. Sheriff's Office; Curt Petrik, Sheridan Co. DES; and Brooke Osen, Sweetgrass Co. DES for getting both reports in! In addition, capabilities reports have been received from Butte-Silver Bow, Gallatin, Glacier, Powell, Sanders, Toole, Wibaux and Yellowstone Counties. Way to go folks!

Completed reports should be e-mailed to Wing Spooner, espooner@mt.gov. Anyone with questions is encouraged to call her at 406-444-2491.



County	Person(s) Reporting	Capabilities Report	Performance Ability Report
Big Horn	Ed Auker	Yes	Yes
Lewis & Clark	Charlie Gilmore Dave Rau	Yes	Yes
Sheridan	Curt Petrik	Yes	Yes
Sweetgrass	Brooke Osen	Yes	Yes

SIGB Technical Working Group Initiates Long-Term Planning Effort

Montana Highway Patrol Major Tom Butler, the SIGB Technical Working Group Chair, asked Broadwater County representative Dave Clouse to lead a long-term planning effort for microwave and trunking build-out at the group's April 24 meeting in Billings. Dave accepted this responsibility and initiated a working session on May 8.

Since the dissolution of Interoperability Montana (IM), the focus of federal, state and local Land Mobile Radio (LMR) stakeholders has centered on completing projects that were left incomplete at the time of IM's dissolution. Due to the terrific efforts of federal, state and local partners, a majority of these projects have been brought to completion. A few projects still need to be completed, and this is—and remains—an important priority for all LMR stakeholders. Now is the time to begin moving forward, crafting the vision, strategic plan and technical standards for the LMR systems of tomorrow.

HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

Maj. Butler and other members of the SIGB Technical Working Group recognize and support an inclusive approach to strategic planning and technical standard development. Dave Clouse's experience with the deployment of statewide microwave and trunking assets over the past several years, along with his leadership in the original Lewis and Clark County communications project, is a great match for leading this effort.

This group will evaluate system and technical requirements associated with current and future LMR systems, software, hardware operations, maintenance and upgrades and will develop recommendations for future deployments.

The next SIGB Technical Working Group meeting is set for Tues., May 22 at 1:00 at the MHP Office conference room, 2550 Prospect Ave., in Helena.

SIGB Members Updated on Narrowbanding

Narrowbanding is the process of moving your radio communication from 25 kHz (Wideband) to 12.5 kHz (Narrowband) spacing. Most current public safety radio systems use 25 kHz-wide channels. The FCC began a narrowbanding initiative in 1991 and by 2003 had a published plan. The initiative primarily affects wireless license holders in the Public Safety Pool (PW).

The plan calls for a 10-year implementation/migration to narrowband, and the deadline is Jan 1, 2013. After Jan 1, 2013, you are no longer allowed to operate on a wideband channel. For most groups, this mandate requires an amendment to their wireless license and potentially the purchase of new narrowband enabled equipment.

Julia Noland, Interoperability Communications Planner for the SWIC office, gave a review of narrowbanding at the recent meeting of the SIGB. Click [here](#) to view the presentation. She reported that of the 12,044 PW wireless licenses issued by the FCC for use in Montana, 418 of them are still not narrowbanded.

As part of the SWIC Office's outreach efforts, Julia will provide a narrowbanding overview presentation at the June APCO/MSPOA conference in Great Falls. Please plan on attending and learning more about this important initiative.

If you require technical assistance in narrowbanding your license, please contact Scott Bradford at sbradford@mt.gov or (406) 444-3782. Look for additional narrowbanding articles discussing different aspects of the narrowband initiative in the next several HAM newsletters!

Plan to Attend the APCO/MSPOA Conferences

The Montana Chapter of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) is holding its annual conference in conjunction with the Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association (MSPOA) (<http://www.mspsa.org>) June 13-14 at the Great Falls Holiday Inn. Plus, special day-long workshops are being offered June 12 and 15: An all-day domestic violence class instructed by Roxanne Ross with the Montana Law Enforcement Academy and a day-long Detention Officer Training session on June 12 as well as a Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) Team Leader training on June 15, instructed by Kimberly Burdick, Chouteau County and Michele Blais, Montana Highway Patrol.

Award nominations for outstanding public safety performers of the year are being accepted through Fri., June 1. Forms are located on the website at www.mtapco.org and are to be submitted to Lecia Kelly at lkelly@chouteaucosomt.com. Westek Marketing is again sponsoring cash prizes for winners in each category. The categories are: Public-Safety Communications Line Supervisor, Information Technologist, Radio Technologist, Telecommunicator, Trainer and Manager/Director.

The conference will offer many training tracks for dispatchers, administrators and technical personnel, including a presentation about "Pro-CHRT," the Professional Communications Human Resources Taskforce report on challenges facing 9-1-1 public safety communications professionals. PSSB personnel will give presentations on the FCC narrowband mandate, National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) Goal # 2 reporting requirements, and a State 9-1-1 report.

Networking opportunities will be abundant, and vendors will be on hand to show participants the newest in technological solutions. For more information please contact Kimberly Burdick at kburdick@chouteaucosomt.com or call 406-622-5451.

Upcoming Meetings

- **Tues., May 15: State Agency Radio Users Task Force**
Helena • 2:30 - 4:00 pm
Mitchell Building, 125 N. Roberts, Rm. 160
- **Tues., May 22: SIGB Technical Working Group**
Helena • 1:00 - 5:00 pm
MHP Office Conference Room, 2550 Prospect Ave.,
- **Thurs., June 7: Northern Tier Consortium**
Havre • 10:00 am - 12:30 pm
Hill County Detention Center Courtroom Mtg. Area
1450 2nd St. West